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Nutrition news letter

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Report on Food Fights for Freedom Program

"Given impetus by the Federal campaign, groups of all kinds will present the food story. You will read it in your magazines and newspapers and hear it on your radio. Community Action is the Heart and Soul of the Entire Food Education Program." This quote from a State Nutrition Committee Chairman's letter to the chairmen of county nutrition committees in her State could hardly fail to impress local chairmen with the importance of the part they are expected to play in the Food Fights for Freedom Program.

Judging from the progress reports that are now being received by the Nutrition Division's office, nutrition committees in many States are not only cooperating wholeheartedly in the organizational aspects of this Nation-wide program but are also showing a great deal of initiative in adapting the program to State needs.

These nutrition committees are seeing the Food Fights for Freedom program as a means of stimulating committee action at the local level, they are studying community resources, and they are trying to devise ways and means of utilizing these resources most effectively. There is no doubt that the program is getting off to a good start.

Some of the interesting organizational and program activities reported by State nutrition chairmen are as follows:

Vermont has a close tie-up with State Safety Council in Food Fights for Freedom. Green Mountain Power Company has made possible weekly newspaper announcements of the program. The Governor has issued a special plea for participation in the campaign by all Vermonters.

North Carolina's 100 counties have ordered materials to be used in the program. Information about the Food Fights for Freedom program and use of available materials will be carried to county, block, neighborhood, and other leaders by teams of workers who have been trained to do the job.

Oregon is developing some good food and nutrition quizzes. Approximately 2,500 letters concerning the showing of the film, "Modest Miracle," have been sent to chairmen of nutrition committees by civic clubs, grocers, professional groups, parent-teacher associations. These letters have been made possible through cooperation of a commercial organization.

New Mexico sent out an excellent letter to county nutrition committee chairmen urging participation in Food Fights for Freedom. The letter suggested that nutrition committees take the initiative, if necessary, to get the program started. The letter gave the county chairmen the names of the O. C. D. Consumer Committee Chairmen and the community representatives of the War Price and Rationing Board.

Michigan has contacted 50 State organizations—professional, social, religious, labor, educational, etc., many of which have answered and promised some type of cooperation in the Food Fights for Freedom program. There have been six State-wide radio programs and several newspaper stories for State distribution.

Food Information Leaders

A plan for distributing nutrition information which other nutrition committees may find workable is reported in "Current Episodes," a bulletin published by the New York State Extension Service. Letters have been sent to organizations, such as church groups, women's clubs, parent-teacher associations, and granges, inviting each organization to select a "Food Information Leader" who will attend training schools and demonstrations and take the information back to club members at regular meetings. The Syracuse City Nutrition Committee, following this plan, quickly received the names of more than 200 "Food Information Leaders." The Syracuse Nutrition Committee expected to hold the first training school for these 200 leaders early in November. They expected an enrollment of nearly 200 additional leaders from the city's more than 600 organizations before the end of November.

Food Information Service for Housewives

Other nutrition committees may find ideas in the following report taken from the news letter of the Bay Area Nutrition in Industry Committee in California. This committee has chosen for one of its fall projects a way of bringing nutrition wartime food information to industrial housewives at the time and place they need it most. This is being done by staffing markets located in the centers of Government housing projects with nutrition aides or dietitians. In Richmond, Calif., the Red Cross Nutrition Committee has sponsored a project in the Lucky Market in close vicinity to the Kaiser shipyards. In this central market, the Red Cross has set up its project, staffed by volunteer nutrition aides specially trained for this service. They are equipped with educational posters, Government leaflets, and a mimeographed timely recipe service. A display of the 7 Basic Foods is maintained at all times, as well as a demonstration of lunch boxes for school children. Here men and women shopping in the market may obtain rationing and ceiling price information. Aides at the nutrition desk help them to plan balanced menus, supply recipes for available foods, aid them in getting the most out of their ration points and food dollars without sacrifice of family health. Plans are now under way to establish a consultant service in a similar market which is located in the heart of Marin City's Government project overlooking Marin shipyards.

People Do Change Their Eating Habits

A study made by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the household uses of fats and oils since the rationing of these products, brings out some interesting facts. Though the results of this study are for administrative use only, the findings can be of assistance in planning nutrition education programs. Even though the study was made in four southern counties where the use of fats and oils differs from other parts of the country, many of the trends shown would probably be similar in other sections of the United States. About 200 interviews were obtained from rural and urban families.

Nearly every woman interviewed (93 percent) said she had been cooking differently since the rationing of food began. These changes did not easily upset them; in fact, most of the women were making more drastic changes than they realized at first questioning.

More than half of the urban and a third of the rural women fried less of their food after fats and meats were rationed. One-fourth of all women fried with less grease and re-used it many times. Their purpose in doing this was to save points and money.

Half of the urban and less than one-fourth of the rural housewives had too few red-brown ration points for their wants.

Less butter and lard were purchased by both urban and rural housewives. Cooking oil and margarine had never been widely used in this region.

Less bread was baked at home; three-fifths of the urban and one-third of the rural women baked less. The principal reasons given for this change was rationing of foods, especially of fats and oils, family disruption, high cost of living, and of home baking ingredients.

Cake and pie baking decreased 84 percent of the rural and 72 percent of the urban women baked less. Sugar rationing was the major reason for baking fewer cakes and pies.

More than four-fifths of the rural people and two-thirds of the city people have used less sugar since it was rationed. People who did much canning and sweet baking in the past felt their present sugar allotment, including that for canning, to be insufficient. Farmers were hit the hardest by sugar rationing.

Except for sugar, housewives on farms and in small towns tended to be better off than city women in regard to ration points. Home producers of butter, lard, and meat often had excess points. So did families of low socio-economic status who could not afford to buy the food allotted them.

Even though more urban than rural women were buying or had bought canned milk, after its rationing there was a greater decline in the purchases of canned milk in the urban than in the rural areas—"saving points" was the reason most commonly given. Slightly more than half of all housewives were buying less cheese. The chief reasons given for this were shortages or the poor quality of cheese available.

The main reasons given by all housewives for their cooking changes were: (1) Food rationing, especially of sugar, fats, oils, meats, cheese, margarine, and canned milk. (2) Food shortages. These necessitated many last-minute adjustments in their menus. (3) High cost of living, particularly of food. Women did not accept this with the equanimity they did rationing and shortages. The low socio-economic group was hardest hit. Families of this group cooked and ate less, "though us gits jist as hungry as before the war." (4) Disruption or decrease of the family due to the draft or war jobs. (5) Patriotic desire to adjust to war conditions.

Exchange Depots for 1944 Victory Garden Crops

In one county in Indiana a "Victory Garden Telephone Mart," sponsored by the Extension Service, proved successful in keeping Victory garden crops from going to waste. "Telephone Market Committees" were organized in four of the county's larger cities; persons interested in buying vegetables and fruits for canning called a committee member and gave their names, telephone numbers, and information regarding the kind and amount of products they wished to buy for canning. When a gardener had enough produce for canning, he notified a committee member, who checked the list of prospective customers for someone interested in that particular crop. Committee members also took over the job of helping gardeners to find help to harvest excess crops. Through newspapers and radio, publicity was given within the county to make sure that all interested persons knew about the market.

A town in South Dakota had a Clearing House offering a similar service. Local merchants, as well as housewives, secured their vegetables, fruits, and garden truck through this Clearing House every morning. Fruit jars, pressure cookers, and other Victory helps were exchanged, and the Clearing House was so successful that plans are being made to repeat it next year. The project opened under the supervision of the American Association of University Women with the Food Distribution Administration taking it over later in the summer. Similar exchange depots all over the country next year would keep much Victory garden produce from going to waste.

A Selected List of Nutrition Articles Appearing in Monthly Publications Prepared by the Subcommittee on Educational Materials—Connecticut State Nutrition Committee. (Reprints not available from this office.)

HARPER'S

"The Oleomargarine Rebellion," by Wesley McCune. December 1943, page 10.

HYGEIA

"The Food We Eat—V. Feeding Grandfather, Grandmother, and Junior," by Miriam Zeller Gross. November 1943, page 804.

"Learning to Like Milk," by Thurman B. Rice. November 1943, page 809.

THE READER'S DIGEST

"Only One Way to Get Thin," by Blake Clark. November 1943, page 31.

"Here's Why There's Nothing to Spread on Your Bread," by Harland Manchester. December 1943, page 49.

Nutrition Featured on National Radio Programs

Nutrition will be one of the subjects included on the fact sheet sent out by OWI to National Networks and over 300 radio stations throughout the country. It will be used in station announcements from January 3 to 31. General information on the food situation will be given with special emphasis on suggestions for food alternates. The National Wartime Nutrition Guide will be offered as the "give-away."

NEW MATERIALS (Sample Enclosed)

Announcement of a series of charts, "Get Acquainted with Soya Flour and Grits," prepared by the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics. It briefly describes the charts and how they may be ordered. With the appearance of soya flour and grits on the neighborhood grocer's shelf, Mrs. America wants to know the "why" and "how" of cooking these newcomers. The charts were designed as a visual teaching aid in answering just such questions.

NEW MATERIALS (Sample Not Enclosed)

A series of six phonograph records on different phases of the enriched bread and flour program is now available free to county and State nutrition committees. Each of six nutritional authorities is interviewed for 4½ minutes by an inquiring housewife. The nutrition authorities are Mr. M. L. Wilson, Dr. Mark Graubard, and Dr. Robert S. Goodhart of the Food Distribution Administration; Dr. Norman Jolliffe, New York University College of Medicine; Col. Paul P. Logan, Office of Quartermaster General; and Dr. Frank Gunderson, National Research Council. The interviews are on 78 RPM, 12-inch records which can be played either on home phonographs or at local radio stations. Nutrition committees may find them useful for nutrition classes, meetings of community organizations, or on sponsored or sustaining radio programs. The records may be obtained free from State or regional Food Distribution Administration offices.

Sincerely yours,



Chief, Nutrition Programs Branch.



Associate Chief, Nutrition
Programs Branch.

Enclosure.